DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 264 717 FL 015 371

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TITLE CALS at Carleton.
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 11p.; In: Carleton Papers in Applied Language Studies, Volume I (FL 015 370).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Applied Linguistics; English (Second Language); Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Instructional Improvement; Language Research; Material Development; *Program Development; *Research and Development Centers; Second Language Instruction; Universities
IDENTIFIERS Carleton University ON

ABSTRACT

The Centre for Applied Language Studies (CALS) at Ottawa's Carleton University was established in 1982 as a multifunctional unit for applied linguistics research to include six functions: research and development, consulting, the development of learning options, providing a writing tutorial service, teacher training, and teacher support. Its establishment is the result of the growth of a number of smaller applied linguistics units: a language laboratory complex established in 1964, a writing tutorial service begun in 1974, an English language program for Venezuelan students, and an independent faculty language advisory group. Credit and non-credit courses of various types have been taught through the center in over 30 languages, including English as a second language. The center's activities in recent years have focused largely on second language program design, course and materials design, and research and development. Areas designated for increased future efforts include changes in language instruction technology, development of needs assessment techniques, extension of contacts with other segments of the university, and research dissemination. (MSE)

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CALS at Carleton

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The Centre for Applied Language Studies at Carleton University is a multifunctional unit. It is unusual among language centres in Canada in the breadth of its mandate and in the range of the languages being studied under its umbrella. Its establishment has been the result of a process of growth in a number of smaller units concerned with applied language studies, and of appreciation for their contributions to the university.

HISTORY

Work had begun early at Carleton to attend to the needs of students who required the knowledge of modern languages for communicative use. An extensive language laboratory was first established in 1964; this complex, with its specially equipped classrooms and excellent audio-visual equipment, was later renamed the Language Resource Centre. It began in 1981 (on the intiative of its then director, Dr. Peter J. Roster) to provide short-term courses in a number of modern languages which were not being taught by the university's departments of modern languages and literatures—Romanian,

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for example, Arabic, Dutch, and many others as well. The Language Resource Centre thus began by serving students registered in credit language courses at Carleton through the presence of the laboratory facilities, and then reached out to members of the community—professionals, civil servants, diplomats—through its contract teaching. It is important to realize that CALS came to be established through a series of extensions of existing service activities.

Under the wing of the department of English, the Writing Tutorial Service came into being in 1974. It was established primarily to tutor Carleton students requiring improved skills in English to carry out the task of writing assignments for their credit courses in whatever discipline they were studying. Like the Language Resource Centre, it was a service unit, and like the LRC, had a separate budgetary existence from any other unit in the Faculty of Arts, which was home to both.

The third unit to appear on the scene which was also obviously concerned with applied language studies was the English language program for Venezuelan students. This unit prepared a set of non-credit courses in English as a Second Language especially for the Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho Scholarship Foundation of Venezuela. In 1976, Carleton received its first group of fifty-four Ayacucho scholarship holders who entered a year-long program of study in ESL as preparation for later academic studies in Canada. In 1977, the university decided to continue the intensive ESL courses which were something of a novelty at Carleton, and to open them to students from all over the world and from all parts of Canada as well. As the ESL unit evolved, the Department of Linguistics provided shelter for it, as the Department of English had done for the Writing Tutorial Service. Yet ESL too had a separate budget, and a separate Director—I was asked by the then Chair of the Department of Linguistics, Dr. William Cowan, to set up the ESL unit in 1976, and

continued to run it until 1979, when my colleague, Professor C. S. Jones, assumed the Directorship.

During the time that these units of the Faculty of Arts were establishing their roots, a group of faculty members representing all the modern language departments had come together to provide some consulting services to members of various ethnic groups in the Ottawa area. These groups were interested in improving the instruction in their own languages carried out in their community schools. The Multicultural Teaching Advisory Service (MTAS), as this group of faculty were known, began in 1979; through its work, and the work of the Language Resource Centre, the Writing Tutorial Service and the ESL unit, a number of functions which could form the basis for a larger unit became identified. At the same time, members of faculty involved with the three units and the MTAS became increasingly aware of the many opportunities for research and teaching connected with the services they were providing in applied language studies.

In the fall of 1979, Dr. Naomi Griffiths, Dean of Arts, announced the creation of a temporary administrative structure, which would encompass all three units together with the consulting on language teaching. This decision was taken partly in the interests of pursuing the benefits which the formation of a language centre might bring to Carleton, but also very much as a result of considerable administrative pressures on the three non-departmental units at a time when funding was becoming increasingly difficult. In January 1981, after the Faculty of Arts had endorsed an expanded proposal, Senate gave approval on an experimental basis. Subsequently, a special committee, chaired by Dr. B. A. McFarlane of the Department of Sociology, reported favourably on the work of the new Centre; final approval came from the Senate in June 1982, establishing the Centre as a permanent academic sub-unit of the Faculty of Arts, with its own Director, and with a Board of Management.

STRUCTURE

The preliminary model put forward for CALS included six broad functions, which also appear in the final report to Senate:

1. Research and Development—to include teacher training, materials development, and the encouragement of general research in the area of language acquisition and learning;
2. Consulting—for individuals and institutions wishing to use the services of the Centre: the consultancy will include needs analyses and testing, both diagnostic and proficiency;
3. The Development of Learning Options—in French as a Second Language, English as a Second Language, and in other second languages, viz.:
   a. group options for second language learning,
   b. individual options for second language learning,
   c. contract arrangements for small groups in languages for specific purposes;
4. The Writing Tutorial Service;
5. Teacher Training—in association with Linguistics, all language departments, and the School of Continuing Education;
6. Teaching Support—through the Language Resource Centre:
   a. administration of audio-visual facilities,
   b. production of original material,
   c. storage of material,
   d. distribution of original material.

(Report to Senate from the Senate Academic Planning Committee, June 1982.)

FUNCTIONS

Instruction

Teaching Languages in the Centre is carried out in a number of different ways. The most substantial number of courses is given in English as a Second Language. Some of these are credit courses for Carleton students, but there is also a new series of intensive courses in ESL for university-bound students and professionals, as well as courses offered on demand for other specialized purposes. The Centre also has a flourishing Writing Tutorial Service (WTS) which offers free individual instruction for Carleton students on all aspects of essay writing in any discipline. While most of the students using the WTS are native speakers of English, there are some whose second language is English who also benefit from it. CALS also offers instruction in a great many other languages either through arrangements with the School of Continuing Education or on direct contract to agencies of the federal government, to industry, or to individuals. To date, we have offered non-credit courses in 30 languages. The summer of 84 is to see the initiation of intensive courses in Arabic and Mandarin.

Second Language Program Design

There are several stages of language program design which have received our attention: needs identification and curriculum design and specification; the preparation of pedagogical materials flowing from the design; the implementation of the design in the classroom; and finally, evaluation of the learners and the programs or courses. Some of the Centre's major projects carried out so far have been

- the analysis of French language needs among a sample of undergraduates at Carleton, a project funded by the Language Programs Branch, Department of the Secretary

of State, Government of Canada (Yalden and Donaldson 1983);

- the design and writing of a communicative independent study course in English as a Second Language, on contract for Campion Language Studies of Toronto (to be published by Campion Language Studies, Toronto, Fall, 1984);
- the design and preparation of an approach to training teachers rapidly in communicative language teaching of any language;
- a needs analysis and pedagogical frameworks project for the Department of External Affairs, Government of Canada, for providing language training to commercial officers going on foreign postings.

In addition, there have been many other consultations of a less comprehensive, but no less interesting kind, carried out both in Ottawa and in other parts of Ontario. Another important involvement is the CONDAT testing project. CALS is represented on the Advisory Committee to the Project, which is charged with the responsibility of developing an Ontario test of ESL for post-admissions use in the colleges and universities of this province.

Course and Materials Design

This is, of course, a part of second language program design, but since it is such a large area and is continually in progress, we consider it to be somewhat separate. Ever since 1976, the Centre has been very interested in ESL for both academic and professional purposes. When working with English or other languages for specific purposes, problems of needs identification, of developing curriculum models and the implementation of these models in the form of actual courses remain a great challenge. Thematic and content teaching in ESL has been one important approach to curriculum design, and although several different interpretations have been worked out by various members of CALS, it constitutes a definite trend.

In addition to our on-campus ESL program, we have provided ESL courses to clients in the Ottawa area as well. One notable example of this work has been a course for francophone employees of McDonald's, known affectionately as 'McEnglish'. This course, which blends English with business practice, is reported on elsewhere in this issue of *Papers*, and is one example of what an LSP course can be.

For teachers of languages other than English, the approach taken by CALS has had to be somewhat different. Because CALS offers a multiplicity of languages and employs a large number of part-time teachers we decided not to try to develop courses in each and every language to meet each and every set of needs and purposes, but rather to attack the problem of course development through the provision of teacher training in communicative approaches to language teaching. The Frameworks Project is the outcome of the labours of a sizeable group of researchers, materials writers and teachers, who worked throughout the academic year 1983-84 to produce a series of booklets (to be published by CALS, Spring, 1984) which will be used in short courses commencing this spring. The frameworks are not at all language specific. They concentrate on content at the semantic level, rather than on linguistic form. Our approach is inspired by the *Threshold Level*, starting with the ideas and concepts and then moving to the linguistic forms, the cultural background, and what is socially appropriate. The frameworks provided for the Department of External Affairs will also be used in teacher training for more advanced and specialised courses in a number of languages. The entire approach represents a fresh perspective in program design as well as in teacher training.

Research and Development

Our research program in second languages demonstrates our collective concern with language development for the purpose of functional communication, and justifies our member-

ship in the world-wide network of LSP centres (see Hoedt *et al.* 1981). This type of language development is to be brought about through a focus primarily on tasks which are beneficial to acquisition of the kind and range of language required, and which need not be tasks or activities concerned with the overt study of language forms—in other words, through communicative approaches to language learning and teaching. Furthermore, since most of our work is with language development in adults, rather than in children, we are also very much aware of the need for the learner to be able to take at least some responsibility for his/her own learning trajectory and goals in the process.

The research program in English first language development centres on writing research. Just as teaching in the Writing Tutorial Service focuses on the development of the ability to think and organize one's thoughts through the composing process so the writing research connected with the Centre involves investigation into the cognitive processes entailed in composing.

A word about writing research in ESL courses for university-bound international students. Often students in ESL come from educational backgrounds very different from that of Canada: sometimes they have not learned to compose in their first language, let alone a second; for others, the rhetorical patterns they have learned differ signifigantly from those of English. Yet all must learn to write acceptable academic prose if they are to succeed in our colleges and universities.

Thus, CALS has a research and development stream covering basic research, course design, materials development, and teacher training approaches for English first and second language.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Work will continue in the areas outlined above; fresh starts

are being undertaken as well. For example, changes in the use of technology are already being planned in the lab complex, and we can expect much interest in computers in language research and teaching in future years. The notion of needs analysis is going to be developed further; better definitions of what is to be identified and analysed, and better tools with which to do it are both required. More investigation of the contexts of language use, especially among immigrants, is contemplated—this is certainly an important field, which will require interdisciplinary teams to handle the complexities involved. There is no doubt that the university situation in such a rich linguistic enviroment provides ample opportunities for field research. CALS hopes too to extend its contacts with other parts of the university, since the kinds of studies it carries out and the kinds of teaching it provides can so well respond to the needs of other academic units at Carleton. We would also like to foster contacts with language centres and teacher training centres in order to keep abreast of developments in applied language studies in Canada and elsewhere in the world.

Finally, the results of our research and development must, if they are to have any effect, be disseminated. After 4 years of very intensive activity, CALS has an excellent record in this field. A number of articles in scholarly journals and several books have been published by the faculty; now it is time to begin to publish our own papers, which will be an important vehicle both in making our own work known, and in continuing to forge the links which will enable us to carry out a unified plan of research in applied language studies.

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